Appendix J

Rehearsals

A rehearsal is the act or process of practicing an action in preparation for the actual performance of that action. Rehearsing key combat actions allows participants to become familiar with the operation and to translate the relatively dry recitation of the tactical plan into visual impression. This visual impression helps them orient themselves to both their environment and to other units during the execution of the operation. Moreover, the repetition of combat tasks during the rehearsal leaves a lasting mental picture of the sequence of key actions within the operation. Rehearsals are conducted at all force levels. However, the discussions in this appendix focus on the brigade level since the basic procedures are the same at all levels.

REHEARSAL TYPES

There are five types of rehearsals. They are the confirmation brief, backbrief, combined arms rehearsal, support rehearsal, and battle drill or SOP rehearsal. Each type of rehearsal achieves a specific result and has a specific place in the MDMP time line. The purposes of these rehearsals are:

- Confirmation brief. The confirmation brief is routinely performed by a subordinate leader immediately after receiving any instructions, OPORD, FRAGO, etc. Subordinate leaders brief the higher commander on:
  - Their understanding of his intent.
  - Their specific task and purpose.
  - The relationship between their unit's mission and the mission of other units.
- Backbrief. The backbrief is normally performed throughout the MDMP. This rehearsal allows the commander to clarify his intent early in the subordinate's tactical estimate process. The higher commander uses backbriefs to:
  - Identify problems in his concept of operation.
  - Identify problems in subordinate unit commander's concept of operations.
- Determine how a subordinate intends to accomplish the mission.
- Combined arms rehearsal. The combined arms rehearsal is normally conducted by a maneuver unit headquarters and performed after the subordinate units have issued their OPORD. This rehearsal ensures:
  - The subordinate units plans are synchronized with the other units in the organization.

  - The plans of all subordinate commander's will properly achieve the intent of the higher commander.
- Support rehearsal. Support rehearsals are normally performed within the framework of a single or limited number of BOS. Examples include the FS rehearsal or the CSS rehearsal. Support rehearsals are performed throughout the MDMP timeline. Although these rehearsals differ slightly by BOS, they achieve the same result:
  - Ensure the soldiers responsible for a particular BOS can support the higher commander's plan.
  - Ensure all assigned missions will be performed.
  - Synchronize the particular BOS support plan with the maneuver plan.
- Battle drill rehearsal or SOP rehearsal. The purpose of a battle drill or SOP rehearsal is to ensure all participants understand a technique or a specific set of procedures. This rehearsal is performed by all echelons, but most extensively at platoon, squad, and section levels. These rehearsals are performed throughout the MDMP timeline. This type of rehearsal is not limited to published battle drills. It could be the rehearsal of a TOC shift change, obstacle breach lane-marking SOP, actions a POL section takes at a ROM site or a section action in the defense of a radar site.

REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES

Techniques for performing rehearsals are limited only by the resourcefulness of the unit. Generally six techniques are used:

- Full dress.
- Reduced force.
- Terrain model.
- Sketch map.
- Map.
- Radio.

These six techniques range from extensive preparation, in time and resources, to minimal preparation. As they are listed, each takes a decreasing amount of time and resources to prepare and conduct. Each rehearsal technique provides different degrees of understanding for the participants and has different security risks. Figure J-1 shows the rehearsal techniques in their relative positions, considering: time, resourcing, OPSEC, participation, and level of understanding gained.

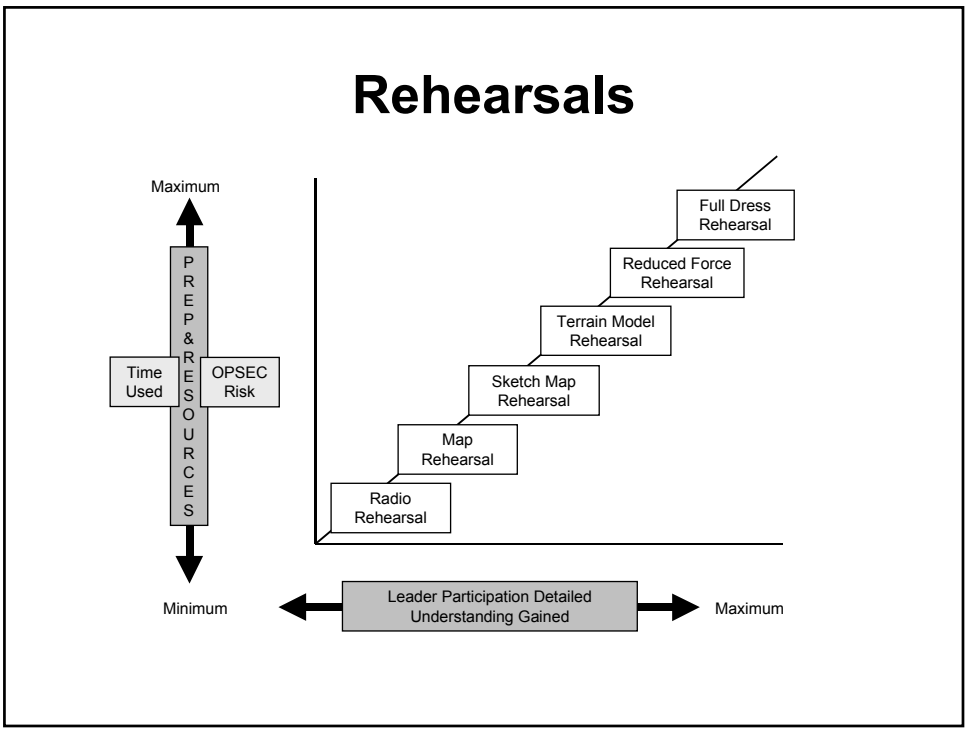

Figure J-1. Benefits and Resourcing for Rehearsal Techniques

Considerations for these six rehearsal techniques are discussed based on time, echelon, operational security (OPSEC), and terrain.

FULL DRESS REHEARSAL

The full dress rehearsal produces the most detailed understanding of the mission. It involves every soldier and system participating in the operation. If possible, units should conduct full dress rehearsal under the same conditions, weather, time of day, terrain, etc., as the force will encounter during the actual operation. This may include the use of live ammunition. The full dress rehearsal is the most difficult to accomplish, especially at higher command levels.

Considerations for the full dress rehearsal include:

- Time. Full dress rehearsals are normally the most time consuming of all the rehearsal techniques. At the BDE and TF levels, ensure you do not encroach subordinate unit timelines by scheduling a full dress rehearsal at your own convenience. For smaller units (company and below), full dress rehearsals are the most effective technique for ensuring everyone in the operation understands their part of the mission.
- Technique. Immediately prior to the full dress rehearsal, units might consider holding a reduced force rehearsal to ensure the leaders thoroughly understand the mission. Although this may look like it

will require more time, the time spent with just the leaders will ensure the full dress rehearsal goes smoothly and efficiently.

- Echelon. A subordinate unit can perform a full dress rehearsal as part of a larger unit's reduced force rehearsal.
- OPSEC. The movement of a large body of the force will certainly attract attention from the enemy. Units must develop a plan to ensure the rehearsal is protected from the eyes of the enemy.
- Terrain. Terrain management for the full dress technique can be difficult if it is not planned into the initial array of forces. The rehearsal area must be identified, secured, cleared and maintained throughout the rehearsal process. During offensive operations, a second set of graphics must be developed for the rehearsal to mirror the actual plan. During the defense, the rehearsing unit may already be occupying the terrain, and a second set of graphics may not be necessary.

REDUCED FORCE REHEARSAL

This rehearsal technique normally takes less time and resources than a full dress rehearsal because it involves only the unit's and subordinate unit's key leaders. Terrain requirements are the same as for a full dress rehearsal, only the number of participants changes. The commander first decides the level of leader involvement desired. The selected leaders then rehearse the plan while traversing the actual or like terrain. Commanders often use this rehearsal to rehearse the fire control measures in an engagement area. However, as during full dress rehearsal, it is highly susceptible to enemy combat intelligence activities. The reduced force rehearsal allows the leadership to rehearse the mission before moving to the full dress rehearsal.

Considerations for the reduced force rehearsal include:

- Time. The reduced force rehearsal normally requires less time than the full dress technique. This is an excellent way for smaller units to ensure leaders understand all required missions before moving to a full dress rehearsal. However, consider the subordinate unit's time table prior to scheduling the rehearsal.
- Echelon. A small, subordinate unit can perform a full dress rehearsal as part of a larger unit's reduced force rehearsal.
- OPSEC. This rehearsal is not as likely to become an OPSEC problem as the full dress because the rehearsing unit is smaller. However, the number of radio transmissions remains about the same as the full dress and must be considered.
- Terrain. Terrain management for the reduced force rehearsal can be just as difficult as the full dress. The rehearsal area must be identified, secured, cleared and maintained throughout the rehearsal process. As with the full dress rehearsal, a second graphic may have to be developed mirroring the actual plan but modified to fit the rehearsal terrain.

TERRAIN MODEL REHEARSAL

This rehearsal takes less time and fewer resources than the key leader rehearsal and is the most popular technique. The commander decides on the level of leader involvement, and then has a scale terrain model of the area of operations constructed. An accurate terrain model can help subordinate leaders visualize the battle and their commanders' intentions. When possible, the commander should place the terrain model where it overlooks the actual terrain of the area of operations. However, if the situation requires more security, the terrain model can be placed on the reverse slope within walking distance of a point overlooking the area of operations. The model's orientation should coincide with the actual orientation of the terrain to help participants orient to the actual area of operations. The size of the terrain model can vary from where icons are moved to represent units to a large model on which the participants can walk. A large model helps reinforce participants' perception of relative positions of units on the actual terrain.

Considerations for the terrain model rehearsal:

- Time. The most time-consuming part of the technique can be the construction of the terrain model. Units must have a clear SOP stating who builds it, how it is built, and when it is built to ensure the model is accurate, large enough, and in sufficient detail to rehearse the mission.
- Echelon. Terrain model rehearsals can easily involve many different types of leaders. This, combined with the efficient use of time, makes it a very effective multi-echelon technique.
- OPSEC. This rehearsal can become an OPSEC problem if the area around the rehearsal site is not secured. The collection of commanders and their vehicles can bring attention from the enemy. Upon completion of the rehearsal, ensure the terrain model is sanitized.
- Terrain. Terrain management is not as difficult as the previous techniques. The location of the site must be easy to find for the friendly commanders, yet invisible to the enemy. The optimum location is overlooking the terrain on which the mission will be performed.

SKETCH MAP REHEARSAL

Units can use this technique almost anywhere day or night. The procedures are the same as for a terrain model rehearsal, except the commander uses a sketch in place of a model. Sketches must be large enough for all participants to see as each subordinate walks through the interactive verbal execution of the operation. Units move symbols to represent their maneuver and location on the sketch. This technique is very effective for confirmation briefs and backbriefs.

Considerations for the sketch map rehearsal:

- OPSEC. As with the terrain model, this rehearsal can become an OPSEC problem if it is performed outside and the area around the

rehearsal site is not secured. Another concern is that the collection of commanders and their vehicles can bring attention from the enemy.

- Terrain. The optimum location is overlooking the terrain on which the mission will be performed.

MAP REHEARSAL

The map rehearsal procedures are similar to the sketch map rehearsal, except the commander uses a map and operation overlay of the same scale as being used to plan and control the operation.

Considerations for the map rehearsal:

- Time. The most time-consuming part is the rehearsal itself. The setup for this rehearsal is normally the easiest because it only requires maps and the current operational graphics.
- OPSEC. As with the terrain model technique, this may be an OPSEC problem if it is performed outside and the area around the rehearsal site is not secured. Another concern is the collection of commanders and their vehicles can bring attention from the enemy.
- Terrain. The optimum location is overlooking the terrain on which the mission will be performed.

RADIO REHEARSAL

The commander and his staff conduct radio rehearsals by interactively and verbally executing critical portions of the operation over established communications networks. This is accomplished in a general sequence of events that the commander establishes. Because of the obvious dangers involved with using this particular rehearsal, only the essential, most-critical portions of the operation are rehearsed. When used, these rehearsals include all communications facilities and equipment necessary to conduct that actual portion of the operation. To be effective, all participants must have working communications equipment and a copy of the OPORD and overlays. The TOC can rehearse tracking the battle simultaneously.

Considerations for the radio rehearsal:

- Time. This method can be very time consuming if the unit does not have a clear SOP for performing this rehearsal. Using this technique requires all units to have operational communications systems.
- OPSEC. As with the full dress and key leader rehearsals, this rehearsal can become an OPSEC problem because of the volume of the radio transmissions and potential compromise of information through enemy radio monitoring. A different set of frequencies should be used to protect the ones to be used for the operation. The use of wire systems is an option but does not exercise the radio systems, which is the strong point of this rehearsal technique.

SCRIPTING AND CONDUCTING THE REHEARSAL

An effective technique for controlling the rehearsals is to use a script. The script keeps the rehearsal on track and serves as the checklist to ensure that

all BOS are represented and all outstanding issues are addressed during the rehearsal. The script has four major parts:

- The agenda.
- The response sequence.
- Unit actions checklist (friendly and enemy).
- Sequence of events.

AGENDA

Rehearse using the tools you will use when fighting the battle: the OPORD, synchronization matrix, and the DST. Use these tools to drive the rehearsal and to also help keep the rehearsal focused. During fire support rehearsals, use the fire support execution matrix. These products can be used as a rehearsal agenda from company through brigade. If time is short, use the agenda as the menu to select events to be rehearsed. Since these items are issued to the subordinates during the OPORD, subordinates are more prepared for the rehearsal because they know which events will be rehearsed.

RESPONSE SEQUENCE

Ensure the players respond in a logical sequence. This sequence must be determined prior to the rehearsal. One sequence might be by BOS; another might be by unit as the organization is deployed from front to rear. Whatever sequence you use, it must be determined before the rehearsal. Posting the response sequence at the rehearsal site is helpful.

UNIT ACTIONS CHECKLIST

- Friendly. Each player uses a standard format to describe his unit or staff action. Use of this type of checklist ensures that all significant points are covered quickly. This also helps increase the understanding of the other players because they are able to key on a common sequence of information. Properly used, the checklist allows the rehearsal to move quickly and improves comprehension.
- Enemy. The enemy force must be portrayed effectively and quickly without distracting from the rehearsal. A technique is to establish a unit action checklist like that of the friendly units, but from the enemy perspective.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The following paragraphs provide a generic sequence of events for a rehearsal. Although developed for a combined arms rehearsal, this sequence can be used for FS rehearsals with a few modifications. This example can be used for BDE-, BN/TF-, or CO/TM-level rehearsals and will support any rehearsal technique.

- Step 1. Ground rules.
  - Call roll; START ON TIME.
  - Quickly review your SOP to see if you have new players at the rehearsal.

  - Ensure a recorder is ready.
  - State the agenda being used (OPORD, synchronization matrix or DST) and the rehearsal type.
  - Provide an orientation to the rehearsal tools (terrain model or visible key terrain, unit icons, etc.) and important graphic control measures.
  - Designate the point in the operation that the rehearsal will start. One event prior to the first event being rehearsed allows for proper deployment of forces.
  - Ensure everyone understands the parts of the plan to be rehearsed.
- Step 2. Deploy the enemy. Deploy the enemy on the rehearsal product, as they would look at the rehearsal start point. Restating the enemy equipment should not be required.
- Step 3. Deploy the friendly. Deploy the friendly forces (including adjacent units) at the rehearsal start point. As friendly units are initially posted to the rehearsal product, they should state their:
  - Task and purpose, task organization and strength.
  - Some units may need to brief their subordinate unit positions at the start time, as well as any particular points of emphasis to include FARPs, and ROM.
- Step 4. Advance the enemy. Begin advancing the enemy on his most likely course of action (situational template) as it pertains to the point on the execution matrix. Since in Step 2 the enemy was deployed up to the point the rehearsal will start, the enemy continues to maneuver from there. Depiction must be definitive, tying enemy actions to specific terrain or friendly units' actions. An accurate portrayal of the situational template developed for the staff wargaming process must be communicated. The enemy is uncooperative, but not invincible.
- Step 5. Decision point. Upon completion of the enemy action, conditions must be assessed to determine if a decision point has been reached. These are the decision points taken directly from the DST.
  - At a decision point: as decision points are reached, the XO states the conditions for success. The commander states his decision to continue on the current course or select a branch.
  - If the commander decides to continue the current COA, the next event from the matrix is stated and the friendly units are advanced (Step 2).
  - If a branch is selected, the commander states why he has selected that branch. The first event of that branch is stated, and the rehearsal continues from that point until all events of the branch are rehearsed.

Not at a Decision Point: if the unit is not at a decision point and not at the desired end state, then the rehearsal continues with the XO stating the next event on the synchronization matrix, and friendly units are advanced (Step

2). Use the predetermined sequence as units continue to act out and verbalize their actions.

- Step 6. End state of the branch is reached. End the initial phase of the rehearsal after the desired end state of the COA or the branch is achieved. In an attack this will usually be on the objective after consolidation and casualty evacuation are complete. In the defense, this will usually be after the decisive actions such as the commitment of the reserve, the final destruction or withdrawal of the enemy, and casualty evacuation are complete.
- Step 7. Recock. After the initial phase, "recock" to the situation at the first decision point. The XO should state the criteria for a decision to change the plan. Assume these criteria have been met and then re-fight the fight from that point forward, all the way until the desired end state is attained. Complete any coordination to ensure understanding and requirements are met; record any changes. Go to the next decision point and assume that the criteria have been met. Repeat the previous steps until all decision points and branches have been rehearsed.
- Step 8. Follow-up and coordination. As small issues arise during the rehearsal, they are recorded. At the end of the rehearsal, the recorder states these issues for review and final decision. This ensures the flow of the rehearsal is not interrupted. "War stopping" issues raised anytime during the rehearsal must be immediately addressed. This coordination is one of the key points of the rehearsals. If it is not done immediately, it will be difficult to get the word to all the players later.

STAFF SUPPORT ACTIONS

The staff updates the DSM/DST and provides it to each leader prior to departure. The targeting officer and radar section leader will be personally involved in updating TA related products. These include input to the RS&S plan, radar zones, cueing agents, triggers and radar movement and positioning. This is the final opportunity for subordinates to identify and resolve dangling issues. Make sure all coordination done at the rehearsal is clearly understood by all players and captured by the recorder. All changes to the published order are, in effect, verbal FRAGOs. As soon as possible, the battle staff should collect the verbal FRAGOs into a written change to the order.

BRIGADE FIRE SUPPORT REHEARSAL

Fire support rehearsals are important for ensuring the synchronization of the fire support plan with the scheme of maneuver. Technical fire control details should be addressed in the DS FA battalion and FA technical rehearsals. The fire support rehearsal should focus on maximizing the ability of the fire support system to support the plan and achieve the commander's intent.

Although this is a FS rehearsal, the brigade must be closely involved to ensure synchronization of the FS plan with the maneuver plan. Whenever possible, the brigade commander should participate as well. Normally the

brigade sends the XO, S-3, S-4, S-2, engineer, FSO, ALO, targeting officer, army aviation LNO, forward support battalion (FSB) representative, and the striker platoon leader and strikers, if available. Key representatives from the DS FA battalion include the commander, S3, S2, FDO, and radar section leader. From the maneuver TFs, the commander, if available, S-3, FSO, scout platoon leader, and mortar platoon leader. The DS FA battalion commander normally conducts this rehearsal for the brigade commander. The brigade FSO and the targeting officer assist him.

The FS rehearsal normally lasts about 1 to 1½ hours. There is seldom time to rehearse every target. Rehearse at a minimum the priority targets. The purpose of the FS rehearsal is to ensure synchronization of the FS effort within the unit and to ensure that the FS plan supports the commander's intent. FS rehearsals should occur prior to the combined arms rehearsal. Normally the technique selected for the rehearsal is the radio technique, although the terrain model technique works as well.

REHEARSAL SCRIPT

- Step 1. - Agenda. Use the fire support execution matrix. Normally prior to the rehearsal, the DS FA battalion FDO will announce the brigade consolidated target list by number, grid and any special instruction for the targets. Establish the response sequence early, and post where all participants can see it. See Figure J-2. If the FS rehearsal occurs prior to the combined arms rehearsal, then selection of branches to rehearse is done by the FSCOORD. If it occurs after the combined arms rehearsal, then the sequence the branches are rehearsed mirrors that of the proceeding combined arms rehearsal.

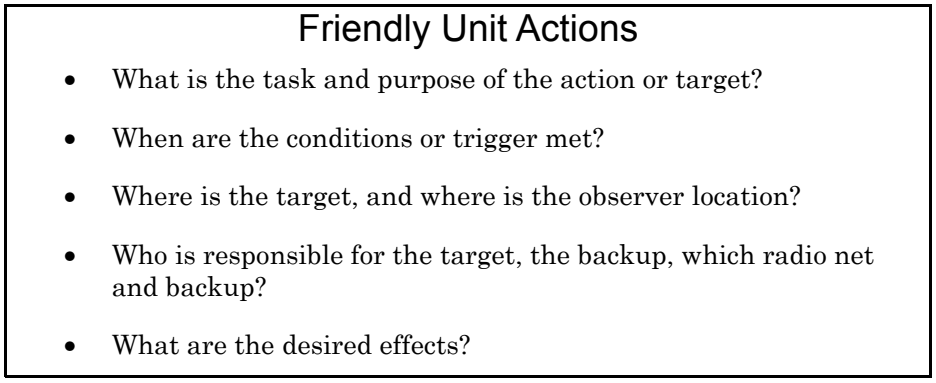

Figure J-2. Friendly Unit Actions

- Step 2 – Deploy the enemy. Intelligence update as required.
- Step 3 – Deploy the friendly. The FSCOORD states the FSCM in effect at the starting point of the rehearsal and provides last-minute guidance.
- Step 4 – Advance the enemy. The DS FA battalion S2 and targeting officer advance the enemy one critical event at a time. When the S2

finishes describing the event, all fire supporters execute their portion of the fire support plan triggered by the action.

- Example scenario:
  - The following is a deliberate attack example. The response sequence is front to rear; several units were left out for brevity. The sequence is: striker, TF Mech, TF 1-1, . . . ALO, . . . and S2. The DS FA battalion S2 states: It is now H+6. SBF Mech has been established; all three enemy platoon positions are being obscured by smoke and suppressed by SBF Mech. TF 1-1 is moving on Axis Slam just approaching PP1.
  - The striker team would respond: This is striker team 2; I am backup for TGT AE0005 vicinity NA123456. TF 1-1's closure on PP1 is the trigger to fire. I will observe the TGT from vicinity NA 345678 and call it on FS net. . . . The alternate method is. . . .The TGT purpose is. . . .The desired effects are. . . . Break. . . .FDC, this is striker team 2 fire TGT AE0005, over. The FDO would repeat the call for fire and issue a message to observer to include time of flight. The observer would end the mission.
  - The TF Mech FSO would respond: No Action.
  - The TF1-1 FSO would respond: This is TF 1-1 FSO; I am the priority for TGT AE0005. Our closure on PP1 is the trigger to fire TGT AE0005, NA 123456. Alpha Team FIST will observe the TGT from vicinity NA 234567 and call it on FS net. . . .The alternate method is. . . .The TGT purpose is. . . . The desired effects are. . . .Break. . . .FDC, this is TF1-1 FSO fire TGT AE0005, over. The FDO would repeat the call for fire and issue a message to observer to include time of flight. If the Alpha Team FIST is participating, then he would fire the TGT instead of the TF FSO. The observer would end the mission.
  - The ALO would state: This is BDE ALO, TF 1-1 closure on PP1 is my trigger. Four A-10s with Mavericks are at IP Cheese. The ALO would continue with magnetic heading from IP to TGT, TGT description, location, and elevation, method of marking location of friendlies, egress, time from IP to target. Any SEAD or ACA changes in support of CAS should be rehearsed with the CAS mission.
  - The S2 or targeting officer states: radar section 1 , this is S2/targeting officer. TF 1-1 closure on PP1 is my trigger, call for fire zone number 1, and critical friendly zones 4, 5, and 6 are in effect now. Cue radar schedule Jane, 12 minutes, over.
  - The radar section leader would respond: S2/targeting officer, this is radar section leader, call for fire zone number 1, and critical friendly zones 4, 5, and 6 are in effect. Cue radar schedule Jane, 12 minutes, out.

For each target rehearse grid location, trigger point, engagement criteria, primary and backup observer and communications method, method of engagement and attack guidance. Ensure the DS battalion S3 presents the battery movement plans and out-of-action cycles. Rehearse the radar target

handoff and include clearing the fires at the TF level if TF FSOs are involved. The rehearsal of priority counterfire targets is required when rehearsing priority targets. Have the radar section leader insert one or two acquisitions per phase of the rehearsal.

- Steps 5 – 8 are conducted as previously discussed.

RESULTS

This rehearsal ensures the validity of the FS plan. It illustrates why fires are needed in relation to specific maneuver events and what they are intended to accomplish. It crosswalks observers with shooters and ties them to a condition or event on the battlefield. It ensures that FS performs the assigned EFSTs and meets the commander's intent. When properly performed, the rehearsal practices the redundancy of observers and nets by having both the backup and primary shoot the targets. The FS plan is validated with the scheme of maneuver, the commander's intent, and attack guidance. It ensures the obstacle plan is coordinated with the FS plan and both support the maneuver plan. Finally it ensures the control measures for protecting and controlling aerial and ground forces are in place, integrated, and understood by all.

BRIGADE COMBINED ARMS REHEARSAL

After receiving an OPORD, subordinate leaders must be afforded the necessary time to complete their own planning prior to a parent unit's combined arms rehearsal. This planning window provides time for critical mission analysis, course-of-action development and analysis, and OPORD publishing. This ensures subordinate commanders have time to assign responsibility for specified tasks and resolve issues discovered in the parent commander's OPORD.

The commander, XO, and primary staff, the subordinate unit commanders and their S3, targeting officer, S2, and FSO must attend. Other pivotal players in the unit mission must attend as well. These include the normal leadership slice along with units operating in direct support such as aviation units and strikers. Whenever possible, flank units and the higher unit should be invited to attend. When time is short, attendance may be modified.

Usually, there is insufficient time to rehearse the entire operation. About 1 to 1 1/2 hours is a good rule but is METT-TC dependant. If too much time is consumed, separate BOS support rehearsals and subordinate unit combined arms rehearsals will lack sufficient time. Ensure you prioritize those critical events that demand leader visualization of their synchronization. Rehearse the most important event first, and, as time permits, continue to rehearse subsequent events. Subordinates should arrive prepared to rehearse the prioritized events.

REHEARSAL SCRIPT

- Agenda. Use the DST and the synchronization matrix to facilitate the rehearsal. Establish the response sequence before the rehearsal starts. Post it where all participants can see it.

- Sequence of Events. Use the steps discussed in the general discussion about rehearsals.
- Rehearsal activities. The FSO, targeting officer, strikers and radar section leader rehearse the same task, purpose and actions for the events rehearsed during the fire support rehearsal. Incorporating these activities in the combined arms rehearsal ensures that all fire support and target acquisition activities are synchronized with the maneuver plan.